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November 15, 1979

Rep. Wm. Royer
1022 Longworth H.O.B.
Capitol Hill
Washington, D.C. 20515.

Dear Bill:

I want to express my deep appreciation for your efforts in pressing for a thorough investigati of the events leading up to the nightmare at Jonestown one year ago. It is essential that open Congressional hearings be held on the tragedy in Guyana last November to determine if our government withheld vital information from Congressman Leo Ryan, and if his death and the death of over 900 persons could have been averted.

Leo went to Guyana in a last ditch effort to determine the truth about serious charges made about Jim Jones and The Peoples Temple in Jonestown. He had received detailed allegations that at least some of more than 900 Americans there were being held against their will under brutal, inhuman circumstances. He would not have led a Congressional delegation there if the facts could have been determined any other way.

There is reason to believe that our government had an intellegence presence in Guyana prior to Leo Ryan's trip there. I know for a fact that a CIA agent witnessed his death. On the afternoon of November 18, 1978, I received two phone calls in California from Washington, D.C. The first was from the Caribbean Desk at the State Department I had been in touch with them several times that day because of my concern over Leo's presence at Jonestown and the potential danger there.

The State Department caller told me that they had just received a report from the American Embassy in Georgetown of a shooting incident at the Kaituma airstrip. The report said that three people had been killed and fifteen wounded, and that Rep. Ryan may have been one of those killed.

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Within fifteen minutes, I had a second phone call, this time from a member of the White House staff whom I know personally. He told me that five people had been killed, including Leo. When I said that his information differed from that which I just received from the State Department, he responded, "Joe, our information is correct. We have a CIA report from the scene."

The White House aide then asked my assistance in identifying the other four persons by describing their roles. Because of my familiarity with the mission, I was able to identify Don Harris as the TV newscaster, Bob Brown as the TV cameraman and Greg Robinson as the still photographer. At first, I thought that the CIA report might have come from Richard Dwyer, our Deputy Chief of Mission, who was wounded at Port Kaituma. But later, I realized that Dwyer knew all of the newsmen by name. The CIA agent did not know them, or he would have identified them by name to the White House.

The identity of the CIA informant is directly related to the extent of our government's prior knowledge of conditions in Jonestown. It seems likely that he was one of the following:

a). a resident of Port Kaituma
b). a member of the local police
c). one of the four members of the Guyanese Army who watched the massacre.
d). one of the civilian pilots (the best bet, in my opinion).
e). a member of the Peoples Temple.

Anyone of the abbve would have been familiar with the Port Kaituma area. As news articles from the scene later reported, the natives at Port Kaituma knew the truth about conditions in Jonestown. It was their disclosures to members of the press at the disco-bar the night before the tragedy about attempted escapes from Jonestown and of the beatings and inhuman conditions there that caused the reporters to dig deeper into the reality of Jonestown the next day.

Given the fact that a CIA agent was present at the assassination of Congressman Ryan, it seems reasonable to assume that our government had received prior reports on the Peoples Temple from the same source and to assume that the same source knew at least as much as the Port Kaituma natives knew.

In addition to the presence of almost 1000 American citizens in Jonestown, was there any other compelling reason why our government would have an intelligence presence in a sm obscure country like Guyana? The answer may be contained in a memo from Jackie Speier to Leo Ryan on October 12, 1978 and in statement made by Rep. Paul McCloskey in a newspaper article in the San Mateo Times following the tragedy.

The last line of Jackie's memo stated "Guyana provides 91% of the world's supply of bauxite". The San Mateo Times article says in part:

> "A congressional investigation of the Jonestown massacre is likely to show that the U.S. State Department was more concerned with promoting exportation of natural resources from Guyana than exposing injustices within Peoples Temple or protecting Americans visiting that country, Rep. Paul McCloskey told the Times Thursday.
>
> The Republican congressman from Menlo Park who had worked with his slain colleague, Rep. Leo J. Ryan, for State Department intervention in the Jonestown commune stated:
>
> "I think an investigation will bring out that the Guyanese government had a relationship with (the Rev. Jim) Jones and that the U.S. Embassy (in Georgetown), knew about it, accepted it and didn't try to intrude."
>
> "Based on my dealings with the State Department, I think it is apparent that the department was more concerned with getting along with the Guyanese... and promoting exports from that country than it was in protecting U.S. citizens."
>
> The most important mineral resources in Guyana are Bauxite and manganese. Gold and diamonds also are mined. Bauxite is the principal source of aluminum."

That Congressional investigation referred to by Rep. McCloskey has never taken place, at least in public. The report issued this spring by the House International Relations Committee was little more than a recitation of selected newspaper articles. It was in sharp contrast to the far-reaching House of Representatives probe promised in the Washington Post article of December 6, 1978 titled "House Unit Plans A Detailed Probe of Temple, Assets". The first paragraph states:

> "The congressional committee that inherited Rep. Leo J. Ryan's investigation of the Peoples Temple has plans for a far-reaching inquiry covering the past, present and future of the cult, including its members, its money, and its relations with the U.S. and Guyanese officials."

The article also states "This plan still has to be approved by Chairman Clement J. Zoblocki (D - Wis.)". I was warned at the time by a committee staff member that Chairman Zablocki was opposed to public hearings. It seems incredible that our Congress, which holds hundreds of public hearings every year on a wide variety of subjects, has failed in the full year

since the event to hold such a public inquiry into the assassinat of a member of Congress and three members of the media, and the murder/suicide of 900 American citizens.

The record is clear that Leo Ryan requested help from the State Department in his quest for the truth about the allegations concerning the Peoples Temple and Jonestown. Leo asked the State Department in writing, to send a special investigating team to Guyana from Washington. If the State Department had sent such an investigating team itself, Leo would not have gone to Guyana. They refused, saying they were satisfied with their Embassy reports that conditions in Jonestown were benign and that allegations to the contrary could not be substantiated. Prior to his trip, Leo asked the State Department to assign a legal advisor with international law expertise to his congressional delegation. They refused, saying that all of their personnel were "too busy".

Prior to the Guyana trip, I was involved in trying to make arrangements for air and ground transportation from Georgetown to Jonestown, and in getting entry visas for the NBC-T crew and members of the press. My phone calls to the State Department met with frustration. I was told that only Richard McCoy, who was in charge of the Guyana desk at State, could help me and that he was on military reserve duty and was not available until his return to the State Department after the Ryan delegation departure date. I was informed that his superior, a Mr. John Blacken, was filling in for him, but that Mr. Blacken was not familiar with the situation in Guyana.

Following the tragedy in Guyana, I discovered that Mr. McCoy was "on reserve duty" at the Defense Department, and also that Mr. Blacken had been Deputy Chief of Mission in Guyana when McCoy was our consular officer there.

This was the same Richard McCoy who was the State Department's chief contact with the Peoples Temple in Jonestown when he was our consular officer in Guyana. It was his reports insisting that all was well at Jonestown which our State Department accepted and supported. Was it also McCoy who reporte all of Leo Ryan's interest and actions concerning the Peoples Temple to Jim Jones while McCoy was our consular officer in Guyana? The fact is that every time Leo Ryan made an inquiry at the State Department or provided data to them concerning the Peoples Temple, he would very shortly receive letters from cult members in the Bay Area urging that Ryan desist in his efforts to probe the Temples' affairs. There was no question that someone at the State Department was reporting Leo's every move to Jim Jones.

A very serious allegation against McCoy was contained in a front page story in the San Mateo Times last December which stated:

"Deborah Layton Blakey, sister of Larry Layton who has been charged in the deaths of Ryan and the others at Port Kaituma, has stated that government officials in Guyana had been compromised by Jones.

A temple defector, Mrs. Blakey has said she was part of a temple delegation which made daily visits to the Russian embassy in Georgetown to negotiate the transfer of the settlement to the Soviet Union.

She has said that U.S. officials at the American embassy in Georgetown were "extremely close" to Jones. She has said that one of them, Richard McCoy, had told her not to take her assertions of oppression and possible mass suicide to the press.

After the warning from McCoy, she has said, she got a letter that referred to her conversation with him which threatened her life if she took her complaints to the press. She has said the letter was apparently from Jones."

I recall reading later that McCoy served in military intellegence prior to joining the State Department. Was McCoy more than a consular officer in Guyana? Was he, in fact, a CIA agent?

Why did the State Department adopt its obvious policy of non-cooperation with the Ryan congressional investigation? To what extent was that policy affected by the concern, as related by Rep. McCloskey, for "promoting exportation of natural resources from Guyana (rather) than exposing injustices within the Peoples Temple or protecting Americans visiting that country"? How far did our government go in withholding what it knew from Central Intellegence reports about Jonestown from Leo Ryan?

One factor may have been Leo Ryan's record as a member of the House CIA Oversight Sub-committee. During his first term in Congress (1973 - 74) Leo authored the successful amendment to transfer CIA Oversight from the Armed Services Committee to the International Relations Committee on which he served. As a result, he became a member of its CIA Oversight Sub-committee. Leo understood the need for the Central IntellegenceAgency as an important part of our national security. He also insisted that the Oversight Sub-committee be informed of any covert operations. Leo was not easily pushed aside.

At the time of Leo Ryan's Congressional mission to Guyana, it was obvious that neither our government, the government of Guyana nor Jim Jones wanted him in Guyana, or especially in Jonestown. Under those circumstances, it appeared very unlikely that one lone Congressman would be able to "kick down the doors", to use one of Leo's pet phrases. On the other

hand, it was likely that if Leo Ryan had been given intellegence data indicating that American citizens were being held against the will under brutal circumstances, he would have used that information to force our government to free those people. Leo would not have had to go to Guyana. And all those deaths would have been averted.

Jim Jones' record as a Marxist is now well known. Our government has always kept close track of Communist activities in this country. How much did the FBI know about him and the Peoples Temple before he left for Guyana? In light of his attempts to make contact with Russia and Cuba while in Guyana, how much did the CIA know and when? And what relationship did such knowledge have with our national interest in protecting our supply of mineral resources from Guyana?

The CIA, however, is not responsible for judgements made or actions taken by our government as a result of their intellegence reports. That responsibility rests with the National Security Council and the President. Some of the questions that need to be answered are:

1. What was the extent of the CIA presence in Guyana prior to Leo Ryan's mission there?

2. Was critical intelligence data about Jim Jones and the Peoples Temple withheld from Congressman Ryan? If so, under whose instructions, and why?

3. Was the same data withheld from the State Department, or at least the lower echelons of the State Department?

4. How far up the governmental ladder did the CIA reports go? Who evaluated those reports and made the decisions? Where did the buck stop?

5. Following the events at Port Kaituma and Jonestown, was President Carter fully informed? And was the leadership of the House of Representatives fully informed?

6. Why has the House of Representatives failed to conduct a full and open inquiry into the Jonestown tragedy and the murder of one of its own members, and into what may be one of the greatest misjudgements by a government in American history?

There are other aspects to the tragedy that should be also made clear. One report after the event claimed that many of the deaths in Jonestown resulted from hypodermic injection of the poison from behind, in the shoulder region, rather than from drinking the poison. If that report is true, it would change the whole public perception from mass suicide to mass

murder.

A complete and public congressional inquiry is needed to answer these questions and determine the truth about Jonestown. Only strong public pressure can force such an inquiry on an obviously reluctant House leadership.

Yours truly,

Joe Holsinger

Joe Holsinger

cc: San Mateo Office

: Jackie Speier

Mankind. This action, must be
examined over and over. It must
be understood in all of its incredible
dimensions. Words fail. We have
pledged our lives to this great cause.
We are proud to have
something to die for. We do not
fear death. We hope that the
world will someday realize the
ideals of freedom, justice and
equality that Dr. King lived
and died for. We have all chosen
to die for this cause. We know there
is no way that we can avoid our
responsibility. But I assure you,
that this act will not be in vain.
It will be seen. The world is not ready
to let us live.